

ible unity. The kingdom of God was synonymous with doing the will of God, and the presence of the unifying Spirit was manifested in its fruit. The Christian light was not kindled to be hid under a bushel, and love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and temperance were not such universal possessions of men that those who had them passed unnoticed in the throng. Nor were the miraculous *charismata* withheld, nor the testimony for Christ by word and work and martyr-death. Those in whose bosoms the new life stirred knew themselves to be, and were known of men to be a separated community. Between them and the society around them, in all the usages of which idolatrous rites ming'ed, a great and ever-widening cleft opened. About them and their fellow-Christians stronger and ever stronger bonds were forging. Travelling from city to city, Christians bore letters of commendation which admitted them everywhere to the society of their fellows. Strong churches sent now and again contributions to relieve the necessities of the weak. Sharers on the one hand in a common hope and life, and on the other in a common contempt and persecution; ministered to by a common Apostolic body, professing a common faith, partakers in common spiritual gifts, practising a common, peculiar morality, they exhibited to the world a visible unity that even deserved the name of an organized unity. They constituted an *imperium in imperio* which trembled with a common life from one end of the empire to the other, offering everywhere not merely a like, but a united resistance to heathenism and heresy, and supplying from the resources of the whole the lack of every part.

It is important to observe, however, that this unity was not organic, in the special sense of that word which would imply that it was founded on the inclusion of the whole Church under one universal government. The absence of such an organization is obvious on the face of the New Testament record, nor do its pages contain any clear promise of or prominent provision for it for the future. The churches are all organized locally, but no external bonds bind them together, except as this was here and there supplied to certain groups of churches by the common authority over them of the same Apostolic founders. No central authority ruled over the whole Church. It is perfectly obvious that Jerusalem exercised no domination over Antioch, Antioch none over the churches founded by her missionaries. Nor were the churches associated in a common dominion of the whole over all the parts. Even in the next generation the most powerful lever Rome could bring to bear on Corinth was entreaty and advice. The Apostles went forth to evangelize the world, not to rule it; they divided the work among themselves, and did not seek to control it as a "college"; they delegated their individual authority to the local officers and founded no dynasty, whether individual or collegiate.